

## Local Spotlight

## ACCUMULATED ERRORS



By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

FROM MAID  
TO PROSTITUTE

The police recently arrested a group of Asian women for engaging in sex deals through social media. Six women, Filipinas and Nepalese, were arrested in Hawally for prostitution. Five of these women had article 20 visas, issued to domestic helpers, and one had an article 18 visa, issued to private sector workers. The women were sent to concerned authorities and their sponsors were summoned for questioning.

The report was not surprising because we read about such incidents every day. But I'm more concerned over the large number of women who enter the country as maids, then end up depending on the sex trade to make a living and stay in Kuwait, aware that they are violating the laws here because they know that this trade is forbidden. I can't imagine how these women suddenly fled their sponsors and decided to sell their bodies.

Maybe not getting their salaries can lead to desperation, because there is no doubt that these

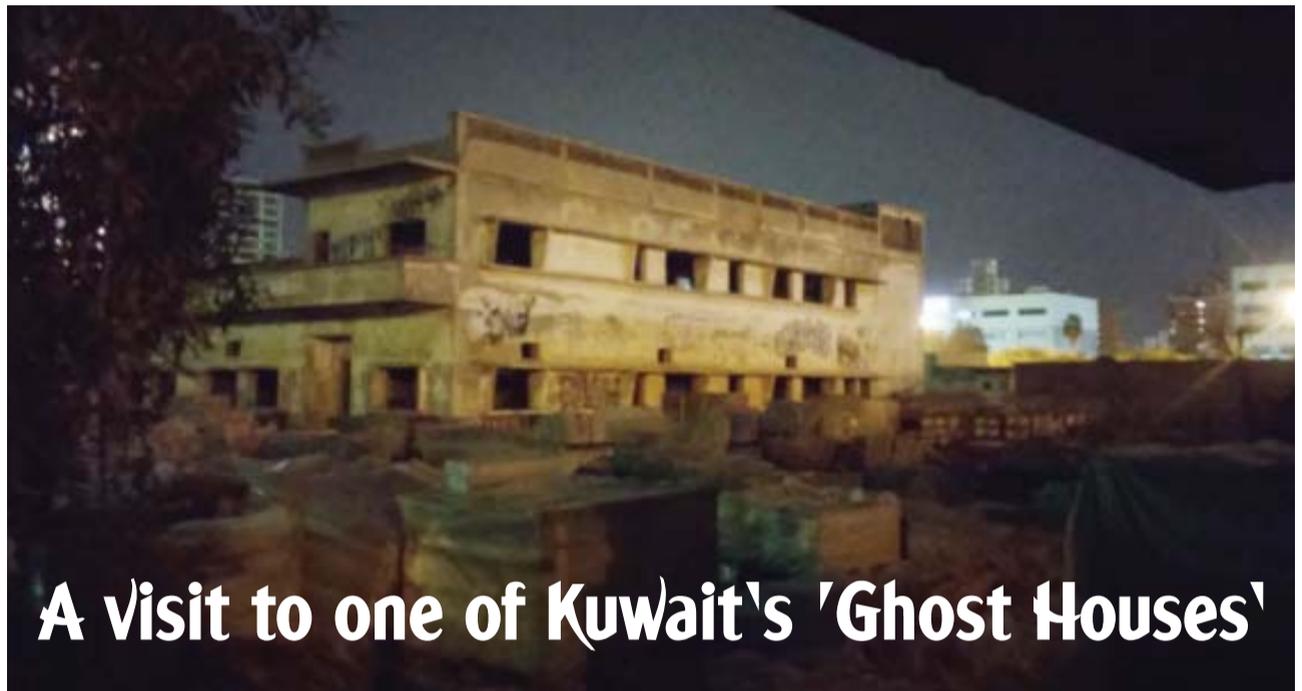
### The absence of parental guidance can also provoke boys to be dragged into such relations.

women know that prostitution is illegal. We should unearth the reasons that forced these women to run away from their sponsors without seeking any kind of assistance from their embassies. They could be infected with HIV, and possibly have already infected some of the men who interacted with them.

These five maids clearly ran away from their sponsors and became sex objects, so if there was abuse, either verbal or physical, then this matter must be exposed and investigated. After all, these women could be victims who turned into law-breakers and might be jailed and deported empty-handed, if not ending up with diseases.

Another issue here is the use of social media. Most users in Kuwait are youths and teenagers who may not be careful or aware of the danger of the sex trade and possibly catch multiple diseases. The absence of parental guidance can also provoke boys to be dragged into such relations. The impact of social media in conservative societies is huge and must be dealt with caution. The media should take some responsibility, being the messengers of awareness. After all, we are a very small society.

Unless these reasons and possibly others are taken into consideration by everyone, more crimes and law-breaking men and women would keep appearing in the papers with black stickers to cover the truth behind their misery.



## A visit to one of Kuwait's 'Ghost Houses'



By Nawara Fattahova

Some people believe in ghosts or super natural spirits, while others don't. But whether they believe or not, most people are curious to find out what is in an "haunted house", and whether it's really haunted at all. When I was a child, many people and even the press used to tell stories of the ghost houses of Kuwait and the many strange things people experienced in them. The most popular of these 'haunted' houses was located at the junction of the Fourth Ring Road and Fahaheel Expressway. Unfortunately it was demolished. However, there are still several popular and well known 'haunted houses' in Kuwait.

As a journalist, I have a desire to know. A curiosity to discover and seek out the stories of Kuwait. So one quiet weekday night, I set out to discover the secrets of one such haunted house in Kuwait. The building is located in Salmiya, opposite the Gulf Road. The complex was likely once a school, with three buildings surrounded by an almost destroyed wall.

The building is now completely shuttered and there is no entrance open to the public. The courtyard wall, now mostly disintegrating though most of holes in the wall have been patched with bars and secured with chains and locks. Before arriving at the place, the weather was warm. But when my colleagues and I came near the building, the weather suddenly turned windy. My colleague murmured the breeze was a sign of ghosts or goblins. It wasn't a full-moon night, but the moon and stars were bright and clear.

We started investigating the place while waiting for our third colleague. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a man quickly entering the place. My colleague didn't believe what I saw, and we approached the door that I saw him entering through, which was also locked with chains. We went near it and called if there was anyone there. Suddenly, an Arab man came out and said he was the haris (guard) of this place, claiming he even slept there.

I asked him if this building was haunted and if he ever saw any demons there. He said "yes", then quickly said "no". He seemed nervous and scared of strangers. I asked if we could enter and check the place, but he said this was not allowed. When I asked what was he doing in this place and why couldn't we enter, he said his kafeel may punish him, as he is guarding marble and porcelain material in the building.

So I told him we will come back, and we left to wait for our colleague. When he arrived, we went there again, but the haris didn't open the gate although we called out to him and knocked the door. After taking a few photos from the outside and going back to our cars to leave, we saw the haris re-emerge. We convinced him to let us in, but he warned us not to take photos of the stored material and not stay for a long time. We took a few photos, but couldn't check the whole place out from inside, as many areas were damaged.

There was graffiti on the walls and a few empty bottles in one of the buildings. Anticlimactically, we didn't find any demons or ghosts - just an abandoned building possibly being used for the storage of illicit goods.

